

RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC)
MINUTES
March 25, 2003

Cochise College
1025 State Route 90
Benson, Arizona

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Frances Werner, Rick Holloway, Lee Aitken, Sandee McCullen, Lamar Smith, Steve Saway, Mary Dahl, William Branan, Glen Collins

ABSENT: John Neal, Sanford Cohn, Chris Newell, Norm Wallen, Hector Ruedas, Lorraine Eiler

BLM STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Elaine Zielinski, Deborah Stevens, Mike Taylor, Al Burch, John Christensen, Gregg Simmons, Dave Mueller, Wayne King, Bill Childress, Bill Gibson, Bill Coulloudon, Teri Raml, Bill Civish, Shela McFarlin, Gail Acheson, Linda Price, Bonnie Winslow, Tom Young, Grant Drennan, Tony Cockman, Susan Williams

PRESENTERS & GUESTS: Stewart Leidner

AGENDA ITEM: Meeting called to Order. (Frances Werner, RAC Chairperson)
Welcome and Introduction of RAC Members.

DISCUSSION: The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on the morning of March 25, 2003 at the Cochise College. Frances thanked everyone for attending. Greetings and introductions were then made around the room.

AGENDA ITEM: Review January 27, 2003 meeting minutes.

DISCUSSION: Under discussion of BLM summary report Mohave Livestock Association issues on page 7 should read as follows:

Norm Wallen: I am requesting clarification of RAC authority with respect to particular user complaints beyond hearing the complaint and requesting staff updates. Does the RAC have the authority, if it so chooses, to hold hearings and collect data pertaining to specific user complaints (as contrasted to matters of policy)? I would appreciate an answer at the next meeting. If so, does the RAC wish to have this as one of its functions? I think criteria and general proceedings need to be established rather than emerge in response to a specific complaint.

Word change-under discussion of Southwest Strategy update change as follows:
I personally saw border patrols using vehicles in the wilderness areas (instead of monument).

ACTION: The RAC does not have a quorum today so the RAC minutes for the January 27, 2003 RAC meeting cannot be approved

AGENDA ITEM: BLM State Director's Introduction, Update on Legislation, Regulations, and other Statewide Issues. (Elaine Zielinski, BLM Arizona State Director and other BLM staff.)

Twinkle Thompson from the Washington Office is coming to Arizona as the national RAC coordinator. Kathleen Clark created this position. This is intended to help us obtain charters and renewals through memberships.

- **Welcome**
- **Introduction of Phoenix Field Office Manager:** I'd like to introduce Teri Raml the new Phoenix Field manager. Previously, Teri was the Klamath Falls Resource Area manager in Oregon. She began her federal career as a cooperative student with the U.S. Forest Service, and worked as a wildlife biologist in several forests in Colorado, South Dakota and Virginia. In addition, she worked in Washington for the Forest Service and also on Senator Daschle's staff under a legislative fellows program.
- **New Rangeland Management Initiative:** Two notices were published in the Federal Register on January 30, announcing the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and the Notice of Intent for proposed changes to the BLM grazing management regulations. As you recall, the Secretary has asked the BLM to develop a policy based on a stewardship program consistent with the Secretary's Four C's (*Conservation through Consultation, Communication and Cooperation*). At our last meeting, the RAC agreed to review the proposed regulatory changes and prepare a recommendation to forward to WO. There will be further discussion on this topic during the S&G Working Group session.
- **Border Task Force Meeting:** The Borderland Management Task Force held its second meeting on February 6, 2003, in Tucson. We appreciate the participation by RAC members Frances Werner, Sandee McCullen and Lee Aitken at both of the Task Force meetings. At this meeting, employee and visitor safety were considered the highest priority. A Safety Subgroup lead by Vic Brown (BLM Ranger) was established to address safety issues and report back to the Task Force.

In addition, a Communications Subgroup lead by Dwayne Collier (NPS) was established to make recommendations to the Task Force on how to improve communications in southern Arizona.

Dan Wirth (Arizona HIDTA) is leading an Information Center Subgroup to make recommendations to the Task Force on the possibility of developing an Information Center that can be used by non-law enforcement personnel as well as law enforcement personnel.

Others volunteered to provide recommendations on a Point-of-Contact List, a “Tool Box” for field people, Fire Safety and Coordination and other priority actions.

Consensus among the participants could not be reached regarding how to respond to requests by humanitarian groups to place water stations on public lands for persons in distress. It was agreed that each agency must make its own determination, based upon its own particular set of circumstances and resources.

Consensus was reached to continue to support and encourage response teams/BORSTAR, placement of distress beacons, Border Patrol Air Operations, piggy backing on Civil Air Patrol and military flight information, increased patrols and coordination, and additional EMT training.

The next Borderland Management Task Force meeting will be held at the U.S. Border Patrol office at Golf Links and Swan, Tucson, on April 16, from 9:00 a.m. until about 4:00 p.m.

- **Funding “for mitigation of environmental degradation caused by illegal immigrants in southeastern Arizona”:** Thanks to Congressman Kolbe and other members of Congress, BLM Arizona has received \$695,000 in FY2003 to mitigate environmental damage caused by undocumented immigrants in southeast Arizona. This funding will be used to clean up trash and repair damage caused by smugglers and migrants.

We are holding a “kickoff” event on Earth Day, April 22, near Hereford, Arizona in the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area. Congressman Kolbe, Assistant Secretary Rebecca Watson and others will have been invited. A number of our partners will be invited to participate, including the RAC. You will get more information as it is developed.

- **Phelps Dodge Dos Pobres/San Juan Project:** The final administrative draft environmental impact statement (FEIS) on the Dos Pobres/San Juan project was completed in January. BLM Arizona briefed the BLM Washington and Department staff the week of March 3. The FEIS was provided to the Washington Office for a 45-day review period. A congressional staff briefing is scheduled at the State Office for April 2. Publication and release of the FEIS is currently planned for July.
- **2nd RAC National Meeting in Washington, D.C.:** The second National RAC meeting is scheduled on April 22-23. The meeting will be held in Washington D.C. and will focus several of the recommendations offered by the 23 chairs last November. Frances Werner and Deborah Stevens will be attending for Arizona. If you have any suggestions regarding the initial recommendations, please provide it to them before April 18.
- **RAC Call for Nomination:** The call for nominations to the Arizona RAC was announced on March 7, and will be open until April 21, 2003. Five positions are open for nominations, two in Commodities, one in Non-Commodities, and two in the Local Area

Interest. The Arizona Republic carried the announcement, which will help generate greater statewide interest. The RAC terms are for three years and are filled on a staggered basis.

Commodity includes: Federal grazing permittee, energy and mineral development, timber industry, transportation or rights-of-way, off-highway vehicle use, and commercial recreation interests. (Outgoing Members – John Neal (Grazing), Sandee McCullen (OHV))

Non-Commodity includes: Nationally or regionally recognized environmental organizations, archaeological and historic interests, dispersed recreation, and wild horse and burro groups. (Outgoing Member – Chris Newell (Environmental))

Local Area Interest includes: Holders of state, county or local elected office, Native American Tribes, employees of a State agency responsible for management of natural resources, academicians involved in natural sciences, and the public at large. (Outgoing Members – Lorraine Eiler (Tribes), and Norm Wallen (Public-At-Large))

- **Congressional Visits:** I had the opportunity to visit the Arizona Congressional Delegation and their staff in Washington the week of March 3. It was a very productive visit to provide updates on natural resource issues for each of their districts.
- **Southwest Strategy Update:** In January, the Regional Executive Committee refocused its efforts on Water (drought, quantity and quality), Fire (forest health, suppression and restoration), and U.S.-Mexico Border Issues (illegal immigrants and other development issues). This reflects the widespread concern land managers in the Southwest have about dealing with the lives of migrants and the impacts on natural and cultural resources caused by smugglers and migrants.

In addition, I will be sponsoring a subcommittee to look at four areas to improve “seamless” management of Arizona’s travel networks. These areas include the standardization of Off-Highway Vehicle Regulations, Statewide Signage, Route Designation System and Access/Map Guides. Tammy Pike, Arizona State Land Department OHV coordinator, is the lead for this group, and Jenny Bradley, Region 3 – Forest Service Recreation Solutions coordinator, is the secretary.

- **“Standing of a Protester”:** At the last RAC meeting, the question was asked whether foreigners had status to protest BLM decisions? Feedback from Veronica Larvie (DOI Solicitor) is that there is nothing in the regulations to deny a protest based on nationality. According to Gregg Simmons, BLM Arizona planning and environmental coordinator, the “Standing of a Protester” is determined based upon participation in the planning process. The BLM Director has always allowed any form of participation (e.g., requesting a copy of a document or showing up at a meeting, etc.). Nationality has no bearing on determining standing. A handout is available from a Desk Reference titled:

Overview of BLM's National Environmental Policy Act – page 46. It outlines questions and answers on Plan Protests.

- **Status of R.S. 2477:** How will the amended regulations relating to disclaimers of interest (disclaimer) affect the State of Arizona?

There is no substantial direct effect on States. The amended rule does not preempt State law. The amended rule defines a state as including instrumentalities thereof and removes the 12-year statute of limitations on a state's ability to file an application for disclaimer, broadening the opportunities for States and other governmental entities to apply for a disclaimer of interest where no Federal interest in lands remains. The intent is to allow the Federal government to assist in removing clouds on title to certain lands and reduce litigation costs in Federal court.

One example of how the amended rule could help the State might be to remove clouds on title resulting from avulsion, reliction, or accretion of lands, survey errors, or clerical errors. Another example might be where Federal property interests have transferred by operation of law but not document exists as evidence that title has passed. For instance, the Submerged Lands Act provides that title to the bed of a navigable water body passes from Federal to state ownership when the state is admitted to the Union, however there is no record of the State's title to the lands.. A disclaimer would merely provide evidence of an existing title, thus lessening future disputes.

Regarding the RAC's role in Reviewing user complaints.

As an advisory body to the BLM, the RAC oftentimes has an opportunity to hear or review disputes or concerns from the public on BLM programs and policies.

The RAC may review these disputes/user complaints during any public meeting of the RAC. Requests for more information from BLM can also be made to get the BLM's perspective on programs, policies or issues involved in the user dispute or complaint. Discussion of the issues with the RAC from both sides may bring to light some important information or action to resolve or litigate the user's dispute or complaint.

The RAC has heard from a few interest groups in the past and has provided some insights to the issues, i.e. Mohave Cattle Growers Association, Arrastra Mountain Wilderness/Barnes lawsuit.

However, resolution of issues involving BLM policies, regulation, or decisions is left to the discretion of the BLM State Director and Field Managers and the agencies internal procedures.

DISCUSSION:

Frances Werner: Asa Hutchinson, who is involved with Homeland Security, stayed in Arizona for two nights. They wanted to have Asa Hutchinson realize what the different agencies encounter in maintaining and patrolling the border. These border agencies cannot communicate with each other when there is a problem along the border. Cell phones were suggested, but the cost is prohibitive.

Frances Werner: If you are appointed to the RAC will you be participating in all of the meetings so we have a quorum?

Lamar Smith: I work a lot with the Arizona Local Conservation District and conservation supervisors are legally elected, some are appointed. They are considered elected state officials. Since we have had difficulties at times in getting elected official representation could those people be recognized as elected officials? I think you would have more participation from them.

Deborah Stevens: They are recognized as elected officials. They may be local, state or federally elected officials as long as they are elected and not appointed.

Lamar Smith: They are all volunteers and would make good RAC members.

Deborah Stevens: I have a NRCD coordinator on my mailing list that I send information as well as sending the announcements to the media. As I pointed out to Elaine earlier, when there is a call for nominations we look for a pool of applicants. They come out with the appointees for the positions and they are also alternates to draw from. You could have a list of alternates that you could use to replace a member. This is done at the State Director's direction.

Deborah Stevens: If you have an ongoing term and the RAC member cannot participate, then they may relinquish their position on the RAC. I suspect that some of the RAC members are participating in other groups/boards and they cannot make all of the meetings.

Sandee McCullen: Is there a procedure that if they are not meeting their criteria on the RAC that they cannot be removed without discussion?

Deborah Stevens: The charter requires that we go through the channels of Washington to obtain appointments through the Secretary.

Frances Werner: Regarding RS2477, you said technically the State of Arizona owns the bottom of the Colorado River?

Mike Taylor: If it is navigable it grants the states the land underneath navigable waters.

Elaine Zielinski: This disclaimer of interest was intended to be simple and clean the books.

Glen Collins: The issue here is that when the BLM tries to streamline the process for decision making you also have people who want to stop the things that they don't want to happen.

Frances Werner: We're glad that this is not a real issue in Arizona.

Steve Saway: Is there any opportunity to partner with the Forest Service to clean up wilderness areas?

Elaine Zielinski: I know we are partnering with Fish & Wildlife and also the Forest Service.

Norm Wallen: Does the RAC have the authority, if it so chooses, to hold hearings and collect data pertaining to specific user complaints (as contrasted to matters of policy)? I would appreciate an answer at the next meeting.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Arizona Statewide Fire Plan Amendment (Dave Mueller, Fire Management Specialist)

The BLM, Arizona State Office, has recently completed an evaluation of its existing Land Use Plans (LUPs) and found that the plans do not meet BM's goal of having a consistent approach to incorporating the National Fire Policy in land use plans.

All the land use plans in Arizona were reviewed. There were some findings in the review that they are not consistent in their approach to the national fire policy. It requires that all fire management plans are supported by LUP's.

The LUPs need to be revised to address today's wildland fire management concerns and issues, including the following:

- The use of prescribed fire as a management tool for achieving resource management objectives, including the return of fire as a process to fire dependent ecosystems;
- Hazardous fuels as an issue, and the use of prescribed fire, mechanical treatment, biological and/or chemical treatments to reduce and/or manage hazardous fuels;
- Hazardous fuels in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) and associated issues, and the various tools to approach these issues, with a goal of reducing hazardous wildland fuel accumulations;
- Appropriate management response, including managing natural fire starts for resource benefit;
- A Statewide Programmatic Emergency Fire Rehabilitation Plan; and Air Quality, and how it will be affected by the reintroduction of fire to the ecosystem as a natural process.

Amendments to these LUPs will then allow the Field Office fire management plans to be updated. The BLM has selected the Dynamic Corporation and The Nature Conservancy to assist the Bureau in the LUP amendment and EA process.

There may be some confusion with the public on the planning efforts. These planning bulletins will allow the public to see what is going on. Public meetings will also help to keep the public informed.

DISCUSSION:

Frances Werner: I was at the Tucson scoping meeting and took materials to the Las Cienegas planning meeting. They were very interested in the fire information because there were two fires at Las Cienegas last year. I don't know if they have provided any comments, but they have the material.

Dave Mueller: We have received comments and have replied.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Arizona Planning Updates (Gregg Simmons, Planning and Environmental Coordinator)

When we had the Las Cienegas annual work plan approved recently, we were at 4.5 million for full funding for the planning efforts. Planning efforts contracting are the Sonoran Desert NM, Ironwood Forest NM, and also Lake Havasu.

Bureau of Land Management – Arizona Arizona Land Use Planning Update

March 24, 2003

Agua Fria National Monument and Bradshaw Foothills/Harquahala Land Use Plan

- Ten (10) scoping meetings were between September 28 and October 16, 2002
- BLM staff has addressed 19 community association meetings and special interest groups between February 6 and June 11, 2002. Additional meetings will be conducted in September to highlight the planning schedule and effective strategies for collaboration.
- The scoping report was approved in February 2003. First round of Alternative Formulation workshops (five) were held the week of March 3. Approximately 50 participants attended each meeting. A second round of public workshops is planned for the first week of April.
- Over 200 Cooperating Agency invitation letters were sent out statewide to local, county, state and federal government entities. Cooperating Agency memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are being developed with the City of Phoenix, City of Peoria, U.S. Forest Service, Luke Air Force Base, ADOT, FHWA, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department.
- A contract to help the Phoenix Field Office complete this planning effort was awarded to Jones and Stokes in May 2002.
- Major issues include: diverse recreation impacts and increased demand for casual and commercial recreation; increased demand for sand, gravel, and decorative rock, and municipal infrastructure; protection of fragile resources, i.e., riparian habitat and cultural sites; concern for public health and safety, i.e., hazardous materials and abandoned mines; access to public lands and transportation planning; land tenure and intermixed management jurisdictions; open space, and trash.

Sonoran Desert National Monument and Phoenix South Land Use Plan

- The scoping phase is underway. The scoping report is scheduled to be complete in the summer of 2003. The planning effort is scheduled to be complete in 2005. Phoenix Field Office expects to contract the plan.
- Eleven (11) public scoping meetings were held between February 10 and March 6, 2003. Preliminary meetings were held in August and September 2002, with the Hopi Tribe, the Ak Chin Indian Community, and the Tohono O'odham Nation to discuss consultation and

cooperating agency status. BLM is working to schedule additional meetings with other Tribal Nations with interest in the public lands.

- Over 200 Cooperating Agency invitation letters were sent out statewide to local, county, state and federal government entities. Cooperating Agency memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are being developed with the Tohono O'odham Nation, U.S. Forest Service, Luke Air Force Base and Barry Goldwater Range, ADOT, FHWA, INS and Border Patrol, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Lake Havasu Land Use Plan

- Five open house meetings were held during November 2001. In addition, a series of community-based partnerships and ecosystems meetings were held in Lake Havasu City, Parker and Bullhead City to foster collaboration. The BLM Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO) coordinated with federal, state, city, and county agencies and tribes.
- LHFO has received several hundred comments. Comments were grouped into four areas: 1) access to public lands, 2) additional boat ramps on the south end of Lake Havasu, 3) request for a trail around the Lake; and 4) no additional wilderness designations.
- August 13, 2002, the BLM Arizona State Office approved the Scoping Report for the Lake Havasu Field Office Resource Management Plan. Alternative formulation stage will begin in September 2002.
- Six (6) public meeting were held between February 15 and February 24, 2003, to involve the public in formulating alternatives. The alternative formulation stage should be completed by late June 2003.
- LHFO did not receive any requests from agencies or tribes to be considered as a Cooperating Agency.
- The RMP/EIS planning effort is scheduled to be complete by April 2005.

Grand Canyon Parashant National Monument/Vermilion Cliffs National Monument/Arizona Strip Field Office Land Use Plan

- The scoping period was conducted April 24, 2002 through July 31, 2002. Ten (10) public scoping open houses were held from May 28 through June 13, 2002.
- On July 22, 2002, a public scoping open house was held at Peach Springs, Arizona, at the request of the Hualapai Tribe. BLM also met with the tribal councils of all tribes in the Grand Canyon Region before the planning process began.

- Several community-based partnership and stewardship workshops were held in Arizona Strip communities by the BLM National Training Center and James Kent Associates to establish local collaboration.
- The Scoping Report was approved September 24, 2002.
- BLM began alternative formulation and writing the Draft EIS/RMP in late September 2002.
- Over 200 Cooperating Agency invitation letters were sent out statewide to local, county, state and federal government entities. Cooperating Agency memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are being developed with the Hopi Tribe; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Flagstaff, Arizona; Arizona State Game and Fish; State Land Department; ADOT, FHWA, and Mohave County. Coconino County is also interested, but has not responded formally.
- Access and transportation are the major issues for the planning effort, particularly OHV use. Other issues include wilderness and protection of the resources.
- There is overwhelming public response to leave the area as it is today – remote and isolated, with no services and diverse recreational experiences away from civilization.
- The planning effort is partially contracted. National Park Service and BLM staffs are primarily completing it, with assistance from Lake Mead National Recreation Area staff.

Ironwood Forest National Monument Land Use Plan

- The Notice of Intent to prepare a RMP for the Monument was published in the Federal Register on April 24, 2002. Nine public scoping meetings were held in communities surrounding the Monument between July 10 and July 30, 2002.
- Over 10,000 comments letters were received and the scoping report is being developed. The scoping report should be completed sometime this spring, 2003, and the draft resource management plan in early FY 2004.
- A statement of work is near completion for contracting remaining portions of the RMP/EIS process.
- Over 200 Cooperating Agency invitation letters were sent out statewide to local, county, state and federal government entities. Cooperating Agency memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are being developed with the Tohono O'odham Nation, U.S. Forest Service, Luke Air Force Base and Barry Goldwater Range, ADOT, FHWA, INS and Border Patrol, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

- Major issues include: OHV use, grazing, target shooting, undocumented immigrants, transportation, user conflicts, public contact and visitor expectations.

Las Cienegas National Conservation Area Land Use Plan

- The Notice of Availability of the Proposed Las Cienegas NCA RMP/Final EIS was published on June 21, 2002
- The BLM completed the RMP with the help of the Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership (SVPP), through a five-year collaborative planning effort. The SVPP is a voluntary association of federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and private citizens who share a common interest in the resources and management of the public lands within the Sonoita Valley, including the upper watershed of Cienega Creek.

DISCUSSION:

Glen Collins: Were the 10,000 comment letters from a mass mailing?

Shela McFarlin: Most of the comments were expressing interest in protecting the monument and were electronically generated.

Frances Werner: I attend the scoping meeting for the Sonoran Desert NM. The Sierra Club members were told what issues to comment on, which generated more people to submit comments. There will be a large block of comments that will be the same because they are being generated by the scoping chair (Sierra Club).

Gregg Simmons: There are a variety of ways for groups to build support for their position. They are treated as individual comments, however, they may only produce one issue.

Sandee McCullen: I would like to thank the Phoenix Field Office and Chris Horyza. They have done a wonderful job conducting the scoping meetings. The BLM is talking to the people. Questions are being addressed by both sides, and a trust has been built between the government and the public. The user groups are meeting and talking to each other. I have been involved in all of the scoping meetings and have left knowing the wilderness people, etc. I proposed when we went to the table that some areas may be more conducive to backcountry byways. Some of these people have never heard of backcountry byways and they loved the idea! When this is done as an audience or sitting down at the table to discuss the issues, wonderful ideas and suggestions are received. The scoping meetings really draw the people in to be involved with the plan.

Steve Saway: Would the scoping reports be detailed enough to see the proposed areas?

Gregg Simmons: The scoping report may be a little too early because all of our inventory work may not be completed.

Shela McFarlin: You will probably see this information in the working groups.

Steve Saway: I noticed in the Agua Fria NM scoping report that it did not show a map of the area. It would be helpful to the RAC to include a map for them to gain more insight.

Sandee McCullen: I did not receive the scoping reports.

Deborah Stevens: I mailed them to the RAC members.

Frances Werner: I have never seen the Lake Havasu scoping report.

Gregg Simmons: This was out in August or September.

Mike Taylor: We will mail you the report right Sandee.

Deborah Stevens: Anyone who did not receive the scoping reports let me know and I will mail them to you. Didn't the RAC at one time elect to receive scoping reports for only their areas? You can also access these reports on the BLM website.

Steve Saway: If we are going to be knowledgeable in these areas maybe we should receive reports for all areas? Is there a consensus that we should be reviewing formal proposals?

Roger Taylor: At the May meeting we can bring you all of the information regarding the Arizona Strip.

Mike Taylor: They may have the coalition for the Agua Fria NM as well.

Elaine Zielinski: These reports are massive.

Mike Taylor: We will figure out how to present this information to you.

Steve Saway: I think all of the monuments will have these proposals.

Mike Taylor: Yes

Roger Taylor: We also have some large proposals in the non-monument areas of the Arizona Strip.

ACTION: BLM will figure out how to get this information to you as simple as we can.

AGENDA ITEM: BLM Safford Grazing Monitoring Program (Wayne King, Safford Assistant Field Manager)

We are doing guideline of evaluations. To do this job we need monitoring data and are using current and historical data. The range staff needs to do a lot of the monitoring for the evaluations. We contacted the University of Arizona for help and found that the Forest Service was having the same problem. We went into a 3-way assistance agreement with the University of Arizona Extension Service. The Extension Service is helping us on Outreach for Drought. There will be a meeting on April 9, 2003. We have a lot of allotments with state lands involved. We have separate agreements on state lands. Our goal has been to gather and collect monitoring data, go through our files for historical data, and summarize it in usable format. Ultimately, we want this information to be available electronically. The ongoing battle has been getting people to do the monitoring and keep the stream of reports going. We have now hired a monitoring specialist named Johnnie Cochran and she is having monitoring packets made. We are also trying to educate the community to know what we are doing and why. We need the ranchers involved, otherwise it is a very difficult transition if they are not involved. Monitoring workshops are being held. The Forest Service has a set of handbooks and so does the University of Arizona Extension Service. The terminology is always different and we are trying to have some kind of clarity for the ranchers. George Rule, who is the contact for the Extension Service and the Range Department. For tomorrow's training tomorrow we have invited the entire Standards & Guidelines team.

What we would like to see is a website created showing the Safford FO allotments and if it is meeting the Standards & Guidelines. We are not there yet.

We have tried to stress through the University of Arizona agreement and the Forest Service that we have a level of trust and reliability on the data that everyone is comfortable with. The

University of Arizona has technicians that are physically gathering data. This year our scope of work is with historical files, taking new photographs and doing field work.

We have funds available and we take the money and try to contract the data gathering. In our particular office in 2005 we have many permits that are expiring and we are trying to get ahead.

DISCUSSION:

Lamar Smith: From what I can see having talked to various participants, including the BLM and Forest Service, that this is a program that is working. I have also been working with the Public Lands Council and the NEPA Association. They are also exploring a MOU with the BLM and Forest Service on the subject of how to have more on the ground monitoring to identify examples in each state of how it might work. I have suggested examples of how this may work and presented them with the 2002 report on the project. Everyone I have talked to mentions that the budgets are tight. I have also sold the idea that the money spent on monitoring is going to save money. Figures from the 2002 report is that BLM put out \$25,000 for FY2002. In the future, we need to recognize that the BLM has been doing a good job. I would say to the other field office managers to think about this as a way to get old and new data. Local NRCS people need to also be involved.

Bill Civish: Lamar, I wouldn't be too hard on the ranching community. I don't remember the numbers, but several educational sessions were held and some folks spent a day going through the process.

Lamar Smith: You're right. What you measure and how you do it is a case-by-case basis. The biggest problem with it is that it wasn't done.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Off-Highway Vehicle "Decision Tree" Concept (Bill Gibson, OHV Coordinator)

Think of this as an evaluation tree and not as the ultimate decision. The last plans that we did in the 80's and early 90's and in the recommendations we did not follow through. There has been an explosion of OHV vehicle use by the public.

We estimate in Arizona on BLM land approximately 30,000 miles of routes. Nationally, BLM probably has about one half million miles of routes. Southern California in the West Mojave area encompasses 9,000,000 acres and they are dealing with approximately 9,000 routes. They have failed in their route designations and issues have ended up in the courts. The Southern California Desert Districts have been told by the courts that they would be designating their route designation system.

Contractor Advanced Resources Solutions was hired and they have held dozens of public meetings. The contractor along with the BLM has to deal with the recreational and environmental constituencies in designating routes. This basically is a filter that asks a number of questions and evaluations made on a route-by-route basis. Is it a current route? Right of way? Does it impact an area of endangered species? These issues all apply.

We are developing an Instruction Memorandum (IM) that will be available for you to review in approximately one month. This IM will be a standard way that we approach route designation in the State of Arizona. We tie it very closely to the planning process. We start out by scoping our issues and identify them. The priority issues in Arizona were transportation, access, and impacts of motorized transportation on public lands. We have identified in the planning process a desire for future conditions. We identify the desired future conditions. Identify priority issues. We subdivide the planning area into sub regions and this should have an appeal to our managers because it is within budget and something we can handle. Work the priority areas first. Identify available data and data gaps. We have inventoried nearly 25,000 miles of routes in this state. Some field offices are better off in inventories than other field offices. Utilize the data that you have. If you have data gaps you go and fill these gaps. At first glance the flow charts are intimidating. This is a very systematic, objective process. The Phoenix Field Office has gone with this process and produced regional maps. They are looking at these routes on an individual basis. At the state level we are developing a uniform process and each field office will have different issues.

Once all or these questions are answered and applied, we should have a solid methodology to determine if this route is useful or not needed.

DISCUSSION:

Rick Holloway: You have described everything except the bottom line. What does this all mean at the bottom?

Bill Gibson: When you get to the bottom you have gone through the filter of questions of whether the route is opened or closed. There are seasonal closures, prohibitions (maybe hiking and no other use). There are a number of options available to the field office managers to decide if the route is open or closed.

Glen Collins: Something that makes sense to me is that when you are done with the filtering process you include the numbers on the route and you can trace through the system how you came up with the decision so the public knows why a decision was made.

Mike Taylor: What Bill is saying is that our intent is to have a logical process that helps us get to a decision in the end. If the public is involved in the process, then you have less time spent in court.

Sandee McCullen: The first thing I said was to visually picture one of your favorite trails and apply the decision tree process to this trail. I think this is going to work.

Bill Gibson: There will be different questions and values with each field office.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment Period

DISCUSSION: None

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Status of the San Pedro Grazing Moratorium (Bill Childress, San Pedro Project Manager)

We will be referring to the San Pedro River Riparian Management Plan and the Safford District Resource Management Plan.

The moratorium will stay in effect until a final decision is made regarding livestock grazing within the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area. For 2004, we have requested planning dollars to begin the re-evaluation process. We need to establish a standalone resource management plan (RMP) and to amend the Riparian Management Plan as required. Most of the decisions in the activity plan are still valid.

DISCUSSION:

Steve Saway: Are there other reasons why you would need to do a new NCA plan?

Bill Childress: We need to review the plan and modify and/or change. This is a decision that the state leadership would need to make. We also ask for feedback from the public. With the RMP we are required to do a standalone RMP either through amending or a new plan.

Lamar Smith: It was not previously grazed as a BLM permit, therefore, the issue would be wide open. You weren't taking grazing away from anyone. Given this situation, what would be the process which BLM would reintroduce grazing should that be an objective? What type of permit would be needed?

Bill Childress: To clarify....The legislation that created the NLCS did not create the moratorium on livestock grazing. As far as the process to evaluate grazing there are two alternatives. One is the no action alternative that allows no grazing. The other option is a form of livestock grazing. In terms of how we would permit it would be to fold it into the traditional way in how you permit.

Bill Coulloudon: If you would permit grazing, it would be from the Section 15 lease.

Mike Taylor: I know in the Stanton, NM area that Roswell issues permits on an individual basis. You could choose to issue permits on a competitive basis.

Bill Childress: We have the two alternatives. Until we open it up for scoping and to address the comments it is hard to judge.

Lamar Smith: You have an opportunity for doing some kind of experimental things. It will be interesting to see how this goes.

Bill Childress: If we get the funding in 2004, we will engage with the public to develop alternatives.

Lamar Smith: Would it be sheep or goats?

Bill Childress: We have not gone into detail about what types of livestock would be allowed. Sheep requires a mesh fence and I don't know if it would be conducive to free range for wildlife

William Branan: I think when it comes to grazing there are three categories of people. Some people think cattle nowhere, some think cattle everywhere, and some people think it is acceptable to allow cattle in selected areas.

Mike Taylor: You test the waters when you go out and have public meetings.

Bill Childress: When we open this up for discussion, we will have the full support and participation from the State Leadership Team (SLT).

Glen Collins: It is wise to do the plan for the entire area and not just the Tucson resource area. The Agua Fria National Monument is part of the Sonoran Desert. When you start to carve out the special areas and let them stand on their own you open the door to other interest groups who think it should be a part of the national wildlife or national park system. It would serve the BLM better if you plan for the whole block of BLM lands as part of the multiple use concept.

Frances Werner: When is the Tucson revision scheduled to begin?

Shela McFarlin: In 2005. We still haven't decided what to do with the Middle Gila. There are rather diverse multiple use issues. It depends on the funding issue and in Arizona what you want to do in future plans.

Frances Werner: There has been very little publicity in the Tucson newspapers regarding the San Pedro area.

Bill Childress: Anything that we do will still need to go to the public and say these are the issues if we want to repackage.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: BLM Field Managers Field Office Rangeland Resource Team Member Proposals

Shela McFarlin: We want to update you on the RRT rather than making the full proposal. Keith Hughes is the Las Cienegas manager.

Keith Hughes: I have a memo that details the progress that we have made to date on the formation on the Las Cienegas National Monument RRT. Our desire was to have nominations for subject RRT available for RAC review for this meeting. We have received eight nominations. However, we feel additional time is needed to reach potential nominees. Within two weeks we can complete this outreach and have a larger pool of candidates from which to choose. Based on staff input and recent conversations with you, we have selected the Model C RAC configuration as described in Title 43, Chapter II, Section 1784.6-2 a(3) for the Las Cienegas RRT. Under these guidelines, we propose that the Las Cienegas RRT be configured as follows: 9 Members (with 2 alternates); 2 grazing representatives, 2 recreation representatives (1 organized recreation representative and 1 dispersed recreation representative), 1 public at large representative, 2 conservation/wildlife representatives, 1 academia representative, and 2 alternates representing the public at large, academia or conservation. We are working diligently to contact additional grazing, recreational, academic and general public interests. We will keep you apprised of our progress. It is our intent to have nominations complete and available for the Arizona RAC's review by the end of April 2003.

DISCUSSION:

Steve Saway: Was any effort made to reach out to the recreation groups?

Keith Hughes: Steven Wood has been involved with the Las Cienegas planning process. No, we haven't contacted any who has been directly involved with the OHV community.

Steve Saway: There are a lot of activists out there that could help to address some of these issues.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Reports from BLM Field Managers**Arizona Strip Field Office Manager Report
March 17, 2003****1. SUBJECT: Arizona Strip Planning Effort**

ISSUE SUMMARY: The Arizona Strip Planning effort continues to progress. We are currently developing alternatives for the draft environmental impact statement, and will be hosting public meetings for the public to review draft alternatives the first week of June in Mesquite, St. George, Fredonia, Kingman and Flagstaff. Once the public has given us their comments on these draft alternatives, we'll write and internally review a draft EIS. This draft EIS will be available for public comment in spring of 2004. The major issues the public is concerned about are access/roads and wilderness. We have received a proposal from a coalition of environmental groups proposing a number of new wilderness areas in both monuments and the non-monument BLM-administered land.

2. SUBJECT: California Condor Reintroduction

ISSUE SUMMARY: Three more condors were released from the Vermilion Cliffs on March 3, bringing the total number of wild condors in Arizona to 36. These condors were transported to the Vermilion Cliffs on Jan. 18, along with five other condors that will remain in acclimation pens for several more weeks. A pair of condors apparently attempted to nest in the Vermilion Cliffs, and two other pairs of condors are showing courtship behavior at Vermilion Cliffs. Two pairs appear to be incubating eggs at the Grand Canyon. Partners with the BLM on this project include the Peregrine Fund, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and Grand Canyon National Park.

**Kingman Field Office Manager Report
March 17, 2003****1. SUBJECT: Big Sandy/Alamo Lake Burro Gather**

ISSUE SUMMARY: The scheduled removal of 235 wild burros from the Big Sandy and Alamo Herd Management Areas (HMA's) began on March 10, 2003. Capture operations began in the northern portion of the Big Sandy HMA and progressed southward. A total of 123 burros were captured by Friday March 14, 2003 when capture operations were shut down due to storm activity. The storm provided enough rainfall to make temporary pothole water available to wild burros. As a result, animals are very dispersed utilizing pothole water to make use of the best annual forage we have had in many years. Capture costs are greatly increased when animals are widely dispersed. It was decided to postpone the remainder of the gather until temporary pothole waters dry up and burros re-form into larger groups. All captured animals were removed from the Big Sandy HMA. Capture operations were terminated prior to reaching the Alamo HMA.

The Appropriate Management Level (AML) for the Big Sandy HMA is 139 wild burros and the current estimated population is 264, or 125 excess animals.

2. SUBJECT: Bighorn Sheep Reintroduction Environmental Assessment (EA)

ISSUE SUMMARY: The Arizona Game and Fish Department has proposed translocation of bighorn sheep from the Black Mountains, Kofa Wildlife Refuge, and the New Water Mountains, Arizona, to historical and occupied bighorn habitats in the Kingman Field Office boundaries, over the next 20 years. Seven of the sites involve public lands, and two are located on State and private lands. The proposal could increase the bighorn sheep population in the project area from a current estimate of 60 to 820 animals.

An appeal is expected from the Animal Defense League/Mountain Lion Foundation. The main points of appeal are expected to be predator control, incomplete analysis or information for water developments and historical habitat, segmented analysis, and lack of a reasonable range of alternatives.

Some grazing permittees are concerned about water development and range fence modifications, burro populations and balance with bighorn numbers, vandalism of range improvements, and the possibility of bighorn becoming a listed endangered species with subsequent effects to cattle grazing. As a result of these meetings with permittees and other interested parties, modifications to the EA were made. The EA is currently awaiting final signature.

3. SUBJECT: Blue Tank Prescribed Burn

ISSUE SUMMARY: From March 12-14, BLM fire staff used a prescribed fire to reduce hazardous fuel accumulations and improve wildlife habitat on 1685 acres of dense chaparral vegetation in the Hualapai Mountains. A helicopter equipped with a helitorch was used to ignite brush fields in the Blue Tank drainage from March 12-14. This was one in a series of prescribed burns being conducted to reduce the risk of large wildfires and improve vegetative diversity in chaparral habitat throughout the Hualapai Mountains. Contacts were made with local radio stations, newspapers, cooperating agencies, and homeowners to ensure that smoke from the project did not alarm citizens. Additional burning will be conducted in the coming weeks (weather permitting) to complete the project.

4. SUBJECT: Pinion Pines Focus Group

ISSUE SUMMARY: On March 1, 2003, the Kingman BLM fire staff in cooperation with the Pinion Pine Fire Department held it's third meeting with the Pinion Pine and Atherton Acres communities. The day's agenda included discussions of potential projects proposed by the BLM, as well as community residents. The BLM's proposals included a fuel break that will encompass the entire community, and fire prevention education for community residents. The fuel break proposal was well received by meeting attendees. Homeowner education will also be provided to interested residents in the spring of 2003 and will be a cooperative effort between BLM and the Pinion Pine Fire Department. The work on the fuel break is expected to start

during the summer of 2003 when the fuels crew is on board. Pinion Pines is second only to the Pine Lake subdivision at the top of the Hualapai Mountains for being at risk from a wildfire in the Kingman area. Cooperative wildfire prevention measures will greatly reduce the threat to the community.

5. SUBJECT: Tri-State Shooting Range

ISSUE SUMMARY: The Tristate Shooting Range project continues to make progress. A public open house has been scheduled for April 16 at the Mohave Valley Campus of Mohave Community College near Bullhead City. A Notice of Realty Action and Intent to Amend the Kingman Resource Management Plan has been sent (1/27) for Federal Register publication, but has not yet been published. If the Federal Register notice is not published by the end of March, the public meeting will have to be re-scheduled for a later date.

6. SUBJECT: Brenda Smith Transfer

ISSUE SUMMARY: Kingman's Assistant Field Manager for Renewable Resources will soon become the Assistant Field Supervisor for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Flagstaff Office. She will be supervising 4-6 employees and be responsible for section 7 consultations under the federal Endangered Species Act. Brenda will also be responsible for consultations on upcoming fire plans with both BLM and the U.S. Forest Service.

7. SUBJECT: Navajo Transmission Line

ISSUE SUMMARY: Dine Power Authority (DPA) filed a right-of-way grant application with the Kingman Field Office for a 500-kv transmission line, 462 miles in length, extending from the Shiprock Substation west of Farmington, New Mexico to the Marketplace Substation south of Boulder City, Nevada. The lead agency Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) in cooperation with the BLM (including the Kingman Field Office- KFO), BIA, and Hualapai selected the preferred alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) as Route NIW for the western half of the project. This segment crosses the Hualapai Reservation. DPA and the Hualapai Tribe have not been able to agree on a mutually acceptable right-of-way agreement for that portion. The second preferred alternative (N2) as identified in both the DEIS and FEIS by the lead and cooperating agencies, is located just below the reservation boundary and crosses a significant amount of public lands managed by the KFO. The applicant would like the KFO to consider selecting the second preferred alternative if negotiations are unsuccessful with the Hualapai. In October, 2002, DPA made final attempts to negotiate the crossing with the Hualapai. DPA is finalizing a revised Application for Utility Systems and Facilities on Federal Lands to BLM. BLM was assigned as lead agency in September, 2002. With BLM as lead agency, we have full NEPA responsibilities and finishing Section 106 and Section 7 consultations for the project. BLM will work with the applicant and their contractor to complete the project and ensure NEPA compliance prior to a ROD and grant issuance, if approved.

Safford Field Office Manager Report

March 17, 2003

1. SUBJECT: Dos Pobres/San Juan Mine Project Update

Issue Summary: In a briefing for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director Kathleen Clarke, BLM Arizona State Director Elaine Zielinski joined Safford Field Office Field Manager Bill Civish, Assistant Field Manager Wayne King, Realty Specialist Scott Evans, Tina Lee, who is from SWCA, Inc., and Dr. Bob MacNish, who is from the University of Arizona, and discussed updates about the Dos Pobres/San Juan Mine Project and the alternative land exchange. The briefing took place at the BLM Washington Office (WO) on March 3-6, 2003. In the proposed land exchange alternative, the Phelps Dodge Corporation would receive approximately 17,000 acres of public lands at the mine site, and BLM would receive 11 private parcels comprising 3,858 acres. These private parcels are located in the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area (NCA), San Pedro Riparian NCA, Las Cienegas NCA, Tuzigoot National Monument, which is managed by the National Park Service, along with parcels adjacent to designated wilderness areas. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was delivered during this Washington, D.C., trip and a 45-day review for the WO of the FEIS is due April 18, 2003.

2. Subject: Summary Judgment for Trespass Charges

Issue Summary: On July 31, 2002, United States District Court of Arizona, granted a summary judgment, and ordered Luther Wallace and Barry Wiley Klump (defendants) to provide a statement of accounting for trespass damages. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) established damages in the amount of \$55,077.58 to the Badger Den allotment, and damages in the amount of \$19,158.51 to the Simmon's Peak allotment. The court allowed the Klumps up to Sept. 30, 2002, to respond to BLM's accounting of trespass damages. To this date, the Klumps have not responded to the order. Accordingly, it was ordered by the court that the amount of damages has been accepted, and the court holds the Klumps jointly and severally liable for the damages. The Klumps have until March 14, 2003, to show cause in writing why they should not be held in contempt of court for violating the court's order. The court's order was to have the Klumps remove their livestock from the Badger Den and Simmon's Peak allotments.

Tucson Field Office Manager Report

March 17, 2003

1. SUBJECT: Moratorium on livestock grazing in the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area

ISSUE SUMMARY: The decision to establish a moratorium on livestock grazing within the SPRNCA for 15 years over the life of the San Pedro River Riparian Management Plan was issued in 1989 at the time the plan was approved. The decision as stated in the plan says: "The

primary purpose for obtaining the lands in the EIS area (San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area) was to protect and enhance the riparian resource ecosystem along the upper San Pedro River. While BLM does not regard livestock grazing to be incompatible with the continued existence of the riparian ecosystem, a decision was made to prohibit livestock grazing for the 15-year life of this plan. At the end of that time livestock grazing in the EIS area will be re-evaluated." The plan expires in 2004 and BLM is hoping to receive funding to begin the re-evaluation process.

2. SUBJECT: ASARCO UNAUTHORIZED USE

ISSUE SUMMARY: The Tucson Field Office has prepared an environmental assessment that analyzes the impacts of the Asarco Working group's proposed resolution for the unauthorized use by Asarco-Silver Bell Mining LLC within the Ironwood Forest National Monument. The comment period for the environmental assessment closes March 14. Under the proposed resolution a Science Team will be created to develop the reclamation standards and techniques necessary to reestablish native vegetation in the area and ensure that reclamation activities will not unduly impact bighorn sheep populations utilizing the nearby area. The team will also develop a monitoring plan to ensure that the reclamation effort is successful. The team consists of representatives from the BLM, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Silver Bell Mining LLC, Center for Biological Diversity, Tucson Audubon's restoration project center, and may include the Society for Ecological Restoration. Silver Bell Mining LLC, BLM, Arizona Game and Fish, and other members of the Science Team, will jointly perform periodic inspections of the reclaimed area to ensure that native vegetation is reestablishing itself.

3. SUBJECT: Update on activities of the Middle Gila Conservation Partnership (MGCP)

ISSUE SUMMARY: The field data gathering for the route inventory of the Middle Gila pilot study area, which includes the BLM areas of Cottonwood canyon, Martinez Canyon and Box Canyon is complete. The BLM and the MGCP plan to verify the routes in the field; this includes using GPS to locate other trails that may have been left off the inventoried routes. It will also give the public an opportunity to GPS any sensitive resources and include this information in the database. Also, the MGCP has requested that AZ BLM invite the agency leaders to a meeting so they can be updated on the progress that the group has made so far. The next meeting of MGCP is April 2, 2003, from 9-1 p.m. in Florence, AZ.

Yuma Field Office Manager Report March 17, 2003

1. SUBJECT: Mittry Lake South Hazardous Fuels and Riparian Restoration Project

ISSUE SUMMARY: The "Mittry South" project is a cooperative effort between BLM Yuma Field Office Resource staff and the Lower Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Group. The project focuses on removing hazard fuels within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and

improving wildlife habitat for several species of birds including the endangered Southwestern willow flycatcher. At this time, approximately 80 acres has been mechanically cleared through contract. The plant biomass has been piled, and will be “chipped and shipped” for electrical power generation by Colmac Industries wood burning power plant facility, located in Mecca, California. After the project site is cleared, it will be engineered for supplemental irrigation with support from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. It will then be planted with native vegetation such as mesquite, cottonwood and willow or with a cover crop to improve soil quality. The end result is to change the project site from a highly flammable exotic woodland into a fire resistant native plant community.

2. SUBJECT: Cibola Research Project

ISSUE SUMMARY: The “Cibola Project” is a collaborative effort between BLM Yuma Field Office, the Lower Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Group and the Bureau of Reclamation. The goal of the project is to determine suitable strategies for restoration of tamarisk-infested floodplains. This research will be valuable in determining revegetation techniques following wildfire and hazard fuel reduction treatments. Currently the potential for recovery of desirable native vegetation in saltcedar stands is limited.

Techniques to improve habitat and reduce hazardous fuels include mechanical biomass reduction of saltcedar, soil microbial and nutrient regime manipulation, seedbed preparation, and individual species trials. Treatments would accomplish BLM goals and objectives including treating invasive species, encouraging habitat for endangered species, improving wildlife habitat and recreational potential, and reducing hazardous fire fuels.

Lake Havasu Field Office Manager Report March 17, 2003

1. SUBJECT: Fisheries Improvement Project

ISSUE SUMMARY: This cooperative partnership project has included six governmental and one non-governmental partners and volunteers contributing over \$13.8 million. The goals of the project were to construct six public fishing facilities, install 875 acres of fish habitat, improvements and stock 60,000 endangered fish into Lake Havasu over a 10-year period.

To date, four public fishing facilities are complete, and satisfy over 50,000 angler use days per year. A fifth site is currently under construction and supported financially by five partners with a public dedication date scheduled in December 2003.

All 875 acres of fish habitat improvements are installed. Partners and dozens of Volunteers celebrated completion of this goal in November 2002. Regional anglers credit this work for turning Havasu’s sport fishery around, and sustaining a direct regional economic benefit from visitors alone of over \$18 million annually. A total of 30,000 endangered razorback suckers, and over 14,000 endangered bonytail chubs have been stocked into Lake Havasu by the program

Partners. We will complete our goal for placement of bonytails near the end of 2003, when the remainder now at four hatcheries grow out to 10 inches in length. Multi-agency monitoring efforts in Lake Havasu prove these fish are surviving, and should ultimately spare both species from extinction in the lower Colorado River.

Future activities aim to maintain and expand the partnership to first meet our mutual goals, and then in the long-term maintain improvements to assure public safety and benefit, resource productivity, and better measurement of actual results to the aquatic ecosystem.

2. SUBJECT: Shoreline Program

ISSUE SUMMARY: Lake Havasu Shoreline Program 2003

Currently, the Lake Havasu Shoreline Program is completing a four-year Deferred Maintenance project that has involved the construction of new block restrooms and the stabilization of banks at shoreline recreation sites. The project will have invested \$1.7 million in the construction of 17 block restrooms serving 23 sites, installation of 18 porta-johns serving 20 sites, and the construction of 27 bank stabilization block walls at recreation sites along the 20 miles of the Arizona shoreline.

Maintenance operations planned for the 2003 boating season will involve trash collection and restroom maintenance at the 105 boat-access only sites. Typical lake trash collection during the summer gathers over three tons each week. Holiday weekends can reach as high as seven tons of trash over a 3-4 day holiday. During a normal workweek, maintenance involves one pontoon boat with a crew of three to collect the trash and conduct minimal restroom cleaning.

This year, fee collections on the lake will be conducted by two Park Rangers, with assistance from the Law Enforcement Rangers. The fees for a recreation site will be \$10 for day use for up to six persons on site, and an additional \$10 for overnight camping. The Lake Havasu Annual Recreation Area Permit can be purchased for \$50 per year, and can be used for either day use and overnight camping at BLM managed sites on Lake Havasu and along the Parker Strip.

3. SUBJECT: Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

ISSUE SUMMARY: The Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO) is in the process of writing a Resource Management Plan to guide activities over the next 10-15 years. Previously the LHFO operated under portions of four management plans.

Public meetings were held to identify the public's concerns, and a scoping report was generated from this information. This report was then provided back to the public and more meetings were held to ensure all concerns would be taken into consideration for the development of the Resource Management Plan, and to seek for solutions to the problems identified. We are now in the plan formulation phase, where these concerns are being used to help identify potential management scenarios (Environmental Protection, Consumptive Use, Balanced Protection). The

draft Resource Management Plan should be completed in April 2004. The final Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement should be completed in October 2004.

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Questions on Field Manager Reports

Rick Holloway: John Christensen, where is the new shooting range located?

John Christensen: It is located on Boundary Cone Road on the way to Oatman.

Rick Holloway: How far is the shooting range from state land?

John Christensen: Approximately five miles.

Rick Holloway: It has taken about three years to find a location.

John Christensen: The residents who were opposed to the previous location have not been opposed to the new location.

Mary Dahl: I think one of the most exciting projects is Gail Acheson's project.

Gail Acheson: It is an agriculture lease near Betty's Kitchen. We have done some revegetation in the area. We have issued a contract to remove 80-100 acres of salt cedar. We found a wood fired generating plant in California that will take the biomass chips and use the product for fuel. The problem we have now is that the chips are not the right size and we need to reissue to contract to have the biomass made into smaller chips. We will replant with native plants. The Cibola project we are working with the Bureau of Reclamation and we will be doing studies in the next few years to see what planning works. This process has just started and the staff specialists are very excited. There are a lot of efforts ongoing along the river. We are not using any chemicals on the chip and ship project. They take in a piece of equipment that actually removes the rootballs and the rootballs are then ground. We consulted with the Fish & Wildlife Service and there are some areas that we have left for the flycatcher near the waters edge. We have had to extend the life of the project because of the nesting times of the flycatcher.

Glen Collins: Shela, what has been involved in the land exchange?

Shela McFarlin: We have not met with Don Diamond at all. Looking with the parcels that fell out of the earlier NLCS exchange he wanted to pull this back together and met with us in November and December. The situation is we have a deal in land located in an area that is on the disposal map based on the 1988-89 decision. We have some maps showing these areas. They are called the Ironwood preservation LLC. We met with the county and said that these folks are interested in the area. The county said that we would work it out. BLM looked at parcels that we would like to keep. Looking at a map there is an entire township seven miles east of Florence. They were aware that this is pigmy own recovery area and might not be a go. We talked to the county and the City of Florence and the environmentalists are opposed. We are involved and we are working with them and have showed the 18-19 parcels that BLM is interested in acquiring. Bruce Babbitt is coming out on Friday and meeting with the editorial boards in Tucson. The kinds of lands at stake would solve a lot of Pima County's problems. There are other land exchanges being proposed as well.

Sandee McCullen: What is the next step?

Shela McFarlin: We will have Francisco bring in the maps and show what we can from aerial photos what would be in conformance with the plan.

Mike Taylor: Bill Gibson is tasked with how big of an impact with the rate of impact the funds will have on BLM. We knew all along that this could happen.

Sandee McCullen: I just want to make sure that we will stay in partnership on this.

ACTION: N/A**AGENDA ITEM: Report from the Standards & Guidelines Working Group**

(Lamar Smith, Chair)

We are having Standards & Guidelines training tomorrow for RAC members, particularly the new RAC members. I don't know if it's in our charter, but it specifically says that you will be given Standards & Guidelines training. I think it is important that the new RAC people attend the training. We have also expanded this to include RRT people.

Bill Coulloudon: We will meet here at 8:00 a.m. tomorrow for the training session. We will have RRT members from both Safford and Tucson attending and the biological planning group from Las Cienegas Empire Ranch. There will also be a training session at the Arizona Strip on May 7, 2003; sessions at the Kingman and Lake Havasu Field Offices on May 19, 2003; and another tentatively scheduled for Yuma the second or third week in April.

DISCUSSION:

Deborah Stevens: Just for clarification, there are only two people on the RAC who have not had Standards & Guidelines training.

Bill Coulloudon: We have prepared a handbook for all of the people attending the training sessions.

Lamar Smith: We talked on the proposed rulemaking on the changing of grazing regulation. We agreed last time that Glen Collins and I would prepare some comments. Both of us have been involved with other groups that are making comments and we can send this out by email. The comments are due by May 2, 2003. When the actual proposed regulations come out, then you will have another opportunity to make comments.

Steve Saway: Lamar, I would be interested if any of this would conflict with the LUPs and what may come out of this planning process.

Lamar Smith: I think the Las Cienegas situation is higher than the San Pedro area and was not an existing BLM permit in the beginning so there is not a long history. If you have it spelled out in the plan this would solve the problem. Another concern would be if you have a normal grazing permit and if your monitoring indicates an increase, what criteria would be used to decide if an increase would be granted?

Bill Coulloudon: What is proposed in the plan is in accordance in the regulations. If one year you want more head in the pasture and less the following year, you are covered with the grazing process outlined in the plan. They are not proposing to change any of the permit use that deals with grazing permits of upper levels of use.

Glen Collins: This should make the grazing permits more friendly than how it was in the last representation.

Bill Coulloudon: Washington is looking to have a public meeting on policy concepts. They want the meetings held between March 24 and April 16. I am waiting for more information from Washington, D.C. We would tentatively like to meet at the Crowne Plaza on April 19, 2003. You will receive notification from Deborah Stevens.

Deborah Stevens: We will not have authorization to do this until we have authorization by the OMB.

Frances Werner: What is the intent of this meeting?

Bill Coulloudon: This is a scoping meeting to inform the public on steward citizen-based concepts. We will not have a debate on proposed policy. I have not yet received direction from Washington telling us what the concepts are.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Discussion on Public Relations Working Group (Steve Saway, Chair)

The Public Relations Working Group is targeting April to publish the next set of RAC notes. If you have any special comments, please send an email to me.

DISCUSSION: None

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Discussion on Recreation and Tourism Working Group (Sande McCullen, Chair)

We received a final report from Bill Gibson this morning. There are three SRP applications proposed for the Middle Gila Conservation Partnership area. One of those requests is Special Recreation Permits. One of them has been completed and we had a final report that was very good. This was our rock crawl competitive event. We have a club Jamboree 4x4 event next weekend. As a result of the masses of OHV use in the Florence Junction/Box Canyon area the Tucson Field Office is looking at making a programmatic EA. I think this will work out positively for OHV use.

A major topic was the need for an OHV permit sticker program. Since the OHV gas tax is gone, now is the time to push for an OHV green sticker program. The motivator might be the Southwest Strategy as the moving body to present a proposal to the legislature. Elaine said that she will need more information. Game & Fish is looking into this program and I will have more plans to you soon.

DISCUSSION:

Gail Acheson: Game & Fish may be doing something and it might be beneficial to have the agencies collaborating together.

Rick Holloway: I would hate to start calling this the green sticker like they do in California. In Montana they lost the tax for boating activities and other recreational activities through the state. Along with the OHV stickers information should be handed out for proper OHV use. We need control management. The occasional or recreational user is the one causing 90 percent of the problem. Funding is needed for education, etc.

Sande McCullen: The private group is calling it a copper sticker. Has anything been settled from the last meeting where we are talking of someone from the RAC being involved in the OHV subcommittee?

Elaine Zielinski: We will be meeting in April. I think they are taking on huge, multiple tasks and probably some of it is appropriate under the Southwest Strategy and some of it is not appropriate. All of these issues are legitimate issues, but may not be the proper forum to start.

Sandee McCullen: Has anything come from the MGCP leadership meeting?

Mike Taylor: I mentioned to Glen that I made some calls to the Tonto and to the Arizona State Land Office. I have not received a callback from the Tonto. At the State Land Office I talked to the Deputy Director. I said you may want to talk to Tammy Pike, one of your employees who has been a part of this and he agreed to talk to Tammy. Depending on feedback, I was going to prepare a formal letter to invite them to the meeting.

Sandee McCullen: It was brought up a couple of meetings ago regarding the BLM adopt-a-trail program. This has been handed to Bill Gibson. Bill and I will meet sometime next week.

William Branran: The title of this group is Recreation & Tourism. I have been to two meetings and all I have heard is OHV. Has anybody mentioned hunting and fishing?

Sandee McCullen: Nobody has brought this up at the meeting.

William Branran: I can't believe that the committee is looking only at OHV.

Rick Holloway: There is a strong OHV presence on the RAC and it takes a number of people to work with our group to see if we can get on these other ventures. I would like to see other people come and get involved. I know in Lake Havasu we have a lot of boating issues. Lake Havasu has taken a major hit on OHV activities.

Glen Collins: The public doesn't come to get permits from BLM for most activities. The people going hunting and fishing are going to the Game & Fish instead of the RAC.

Rick Holloway: OHV has taken a large amount of time because they have lobbyist out there working, however, other groups do need representation.

Stewart Leightner (Executive Director SE Arizona Land Trust): You have come to this group with your own special interests. You also have the responsibility to look at all of the other aspects.

Sandee McCullen: The Recreation Tourism subgroup is open to any issues presented to us. The OHV came on the headlines because of the OHV strategy on a national level. We discussed the cleanups, shooting, etc. If we have someone with an issue, then please bring it to the group. If we don't have something to address, we don't address it.

Bill Branran: I think the RAC reflects too strong of an emphasis on OHV. There is camping, fishing, hiking, etc. If you look at Las Cinemas, the BLM goes out of their way to accommodate all groups of people.

Steve Saway: As we get involved with these plans I think that we will find that there are other recreational issues that we should address.

Frances Werner: The access issue is critical in all parts of the State of Arizona.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Report from Wild Horse and Burro Working Group (Lee Aitken) Wild Horses and Burros in Arizona

The Arizona Field Offices of the BLM are struggling with tighter budget constraints that adversely affect the effective management of wild horse and burro populations mandated by federal regulations.

Federal employees are not allowed to lobby for funding for federal programs so, it is incumbent that the responsibility fall with the RAC to advocate for important programs such as the Wild Horse and Burro Program. The BLM, Arizona Field Offices, have developed several Arizona Program Initiatives-Arizona Action Plans for wild horses and burros. The plan is to:

- ❑ Establish Appropriate Management Levels (AMLs') for each Herd Management Area (HMA) by 2002.
- ❑ Achieve Wild Burro AMLs' (estimated at 1,790)
- ❑ Develop acceptable and defensible census techniques within 3 years, and employ those techniques to each HMA every 3 years.
- ❑ Update and re-write HMA plans by 2004
- ❑ Monitor and evaluate each HMA over the next 4 years
- ❑ Continue to support the national program by conducting satellite adoptions statewide.
- ❑ Conduct compliance on adopted wild horses and burros, issue titles after one year
- ❑ Develop the Kingman Corrals into a Regional Facility

The role of the Resource Advisory Committee

The Arizona RAC has the responsibility to support and advocate on behalf of the BLM to seek increases in federal funding as well as developing an effective program to generate necessary capital for the Wild Horse and Burro Program. Listed below are several action items that are useful tools to accomplish the business plan.

- ❑ Raise awareness of the Wild Horse and Burro Program and Initiatives with the general public. Seek a visual program design and development through securing a grant or volunteer efforts by upper class students in the I.T. programs of the University of Arizona or Arizona State University. Use a dynamic visual program employed by a speakers' bureau for the RAC. Develop a group of RAC members to comprise the speakers' bureau.
- ❑ Raise awareness of the Program Initiatives with the stakeholders groups. Set meetings with organized stakeholders groups to seek funding and political support. Build a network with these organizations that link them with the RAC.
- ❑ Raise awareness of the Program Initiatives with elected officials. Information meeting with staff of elected officials seeking support for programmatic specific funding increases.

Develop Long Range Planning

- ❑ Solicit support from stakeholders groups for effective animal husbandry in the HMA's for burros to reduce the AML's. Smaller, healthier herds.....more adoptions.
- ❑ Reduce the Wild Horse herd through increased adoptions. Healthier Horses. Note to Kiger Mustangs in Oregon. Good animal husbandry techniques.

With the first bulleted objectives we are going to ask the State Leadership Team (SLT) to look at them and give us their opinion. Which of the objective or objectives would they like the RAC to

move forward with for achievement? What is the reason for choosing one or more of these objectives? It takes money to do all of this so after we ask the SLT what they would like to see advance, then we would like the leadership team to request budgets.

There will be national Wild Horse & Burro committee meeting here on April 7-8, 2003. The RAC will make an appearance at this meeting and will not be on the agenda, but will be there to make public comments. We will mention that the Arizona RAC is concerned about the Wild Horse & Burro program and they are there to support the SLT on managing this program.

DISCUSSION:

Rick Holloway: In the meeting this morning we decided that we are here to help the SLT on an advisory role.

Elaine Zielinski: I think that this is one area that we can definitely use the help of the RAC. Bringing it to the SLT would be great. Many SLT members are present at the meeting now. The outreach part is something that we can provide information and support. This would help us obtain more attendance and information from Washington, D.C.

Mike Taylor: Would you like the RAC group to put together a presentation for the May State Leadership Team meeting?

Elaine Zielinski: Yes

Frances Werner: Lee Aitken put together a professional business plan.

Lee Aitken: The business plan has a lot of programs, concepts and ideas. I will have the entire document reproduced for the SLT.

Elaine Zielinski: I will have Deborah send you a list of the State Director's talking points for the upcoming meeting.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Report from Planning Working Group (Mary Dahl, Chair)

Other than some mailing glitches it is going well with the communication. Frances has commented on scoping meetings that she has attended. Gregg Simmons suggested that for the next meeting we should have maps with the wilderness areas be on the agenda. Gregg is also working on a template for all of these plans to be formatted. He is currently doing some outreach into the various offices.

DISCUSSION:

Frances Werner: We are all being informed when the different meetings are being held.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion on Future Meetings/Locations

(BLM State Director and RAC Members)

The next RAC meeting is May 7-9, 2003 in St. George, Utah.

July 10, 2003 at the National Training Center, Phoenix, AZ

September 17, 2003 at the National Training Center.

DISCUSSION:

Roger Taylor: I would like to propose that the RAC hold a formal meeting on May 7, 2003 to allow for the public to attend and comment. Standards & Guidelines training will be on May 8.. We will go to the Virgin River for the riparian part of the training; then we will go to the Strip for the upland training; then to Mt. Trumbell and stay overnight. We have accommodations for 36 people in beds and some may prefer to sleep outside.

Frances Werner: Will there be a van a van to shuttle people to the Arizona Strip?

Deborah Stevens: Yes, this is an option.

Frances Werner: What do the RAC members think?

Steve Saway: Sounds good.

Frances Werner: Last time we flew from Tucson to Las Vegas and were shuttled to St. George. If you have any thoughts, please talk to Deborah Stevens or Roger Taylor.

Deborah Stevens: When I return to the office I will send the RAC an email with the logistics and if they would be committed to the one day RAC business meeting or staying for the entire three days.

Roger Taylor: You may consider starting the RAC meeting at noon and finishing your meeting on Thursday morning.

Deborah Stevens: Keep in mind that this is an opportunity for you to be in the field and learn the issues in the ground.

Sandee McCullen: I learn something new every time.

Lamar Smith: It is good for us to get out and interact with the BLM people and see the country so we remember what we are talking about.

Linda Price: One of the best reasons for the RAC to attend is the Arizona Strip has been working with the same group of people and issues for the past four years, which is the invasion of pinion juniper and OHV impact. The same people always attend these meetings and it would help us if you have contact with these people.

Frances Werner: Any ideas for the agenda for the formal meeting?

Mike Taylor: Proposals for the monuments.

Rick Holloway: Elaine could you give us an update on Southwest Strategy?

Elaine Zielinski: Yes

Sandee McCullen: Discuss the BLM Adopt-A-Trail program.

Steve Saway: The BLM Scoping Plan.

Rick Holloway: Lee could you give us an update from the Wild Horse & Burro meeting?

Lee Aitken: Yes

Elaine Zielinski: Frances will want to discuss her trip to the National RAC Meeting in Washington, D.C.

Glen Collins: Maybe the focus on this meeting should be the Standards & Guidelines process, which was implemented on the Arizona Strip as a pilot program.

Sandee McCullen: I will work on an outline for all of the different issues by contacting the different field managers and then post a basic outline at the meeting. We still need the input into the subgroups.

ACTION: N/A

MEETING ADJOURNED